

**HB 5511 – An act concerning the Budget, Special Assessment and Assignment of Future Income Approval Process in Common Interest Ownership Communities**

Testimony presented by

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I am opposed to the changes to Chapter 828 Section 47-261e subsections (a) and (b) of the Connecticut General Statutes, or the Common Interest Ownership Act. Changing action on the condominium's budget from a majority of owners to a majority of those voting is not in the best interests of the owners at large. A condominium community by definition is a community where all the residents cooperate with one another and act for the good of all. Adequate resources must be provided so that the interests of the community are preserved.

The resources of a condo are the people who are owners of common interest, and provide the required funds to maintain the community. All owners must contribute to an adequate budget for the condo's operation, not just those who return ballots. All owners benefit from the services provided: landscaping, roads, sidewalks, facilities, security and especially exterior maintenance—including roofs, siding, painting, etc. These are the necessities that reflect the value of condominium living, and the amenities that usually draw the unit owners to the community in the first place.

It has been alleged that the current law is undemocratic. I do not believe that is the case. Democracy requires informed decision making by many people—in this case the unit owners. I believe the current law is democratic. The decisions on the annual budget (or special assessment) are made by a majority of all the unit owners. All unit owners have the opportunity to participate in the democratic decision to reject or approve the annual budget. Many people express their opinion of the budget when they participate in informational meetings prior to the budget vote, because they know that democracy relies on being informed on the issues. These owners express their opinions both pro and con, and they discuss the issues with others. These owners reflect the best interests of the community at large when they cast their vote. Again all owners have that opportunity and responsibility.

The current system of voting is democratic because all owners have the chance to participate. There are some owners who, for reasons of their own, choose not to participate in the democratic voting process. Any owners who do not vote have abrogated their responsibility to the community. It is undemocratic for those owners not to participate and to block the will of the owners who do vote.

This is what democracy is about. All owners benefit by being members of the community whether they vote or not. It is their duty to share in the preservation of that community whether they vote or not. *Please reject the changes to subsections (a) and (b).*

*I support the proposed language change in subsection (e).*

Thank you.

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